

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

SENATE RESOLUTION

CREATING A SPECIAL COMMISSION TO MAKE A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF  
RHODE ISLAND'S HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE RELATED TO EDUCATING AND  
RETAINING PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS AND ESTABLISHING A STATE MEDICAL  
SCHOOL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Senators Gallo, Lawson, Pearson, Lauria, Miller, DiMario, Valverde,  
and Ujifusa

Date Introduced: June 11, 2024

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, Nationally the demand for primary care physicians continues to increase,  
2 however, less than one-third of the national physician workforce represents individuals in the  
3 primary care sector; and

4 WHEREAS, Rhode Island is experiencing a net loss of primary care clinicians and  
5 anticipates this shortage to worsen in the years ahead; and

6 WHEREAS, Rhode Island residents are struggling to find primary care physicians  
7 resulting in the use of community health centers and urgent care facilities to meet their medical  
8 needs; and

9 WHEREAS, Increased utilization of these health care facilities strains resources and  
10 creates additional pressure on our healthcare system; and

11 WHEREAS, While Rhode Island is home to a private medical school, no new medical  
12 schools have been established in the State since 1972; and

13 WHEREAS, Rhode Island struggles to retain primary care physicians upon graduation  
14 and offsets these losses with physicians moving into the State; and

15 WHEREAS, Rhode Island must look toward the creation of a college of medicine to train  
16 and retain the next generation of primary care physicians; now, therefore be it

17 RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created  
18 consisting of twenty-one (21) members: all of whom shall be appointed by the President of the

1 Senate.

2 The purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study of Rhode  
3 Island's healthcare workforce related to educating and retaining primary care physicians and  
4 establishing a state medical school at the University of Rhode Island.

5 By August 1, 2024, upon passage of the resolution, the members of the commission shall  
6 be appointed and shall meet at the call of the Senate President and organize and the Senate  
7 President shall appoint a chair, and a co-chair, who shall be the President of the University of  
8 Rhode Island, or designee.

9 Vacancies in said commission shall be filled in like manner as the original appointment.

10 The membership of said commission shall receive no compensation for their services.

11 All departments and agencies of the State shall furnish such advice and information,  
12 documentary and otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or  
13 desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of this resolution.

14 The Joint Committee on Legislative Services is hereby authorized and directed to provide  
15 suitable quarters for said commission; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the commission shall develop and submit its findings and  
17 recommendations to the Senate no later than by January 2, 2026, and said commission shall  
18 expire on January 31, 2026.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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1           This resolution would create a 21-member commission to study RI's healthcare  
2 workforce related to educating and retaining primary care physicians and establishing a state  
3 medical school at URI, and would report back by January 2, 2026, and would expire January 31,  
4 2026.

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